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THE LOST LIBRARIAN

By

G. M. WALTON

Head Librarian
Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti

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Address at the Commencement Exercises
Library School of The New York Public Library
June 12, 1925

With Introductory Remarks by
General William Barclay Parsons
Chairman

NEW YORK
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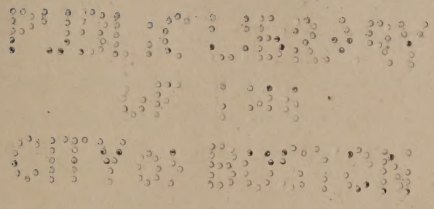

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THE LIBRARY SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT

At the Commencement, June 12, 1925, the presiding officer was General William Barclay Parsons, a Trustee of the Library. He said:

On this, the fourteenth Commencement of the Library School of The New York Public Library, I have the honor to extend on behalf of the Trustees of the Library a hearty greeting to the friends of the School who are gathered here to-day, a deep and sincere expression of appreciation of the high service rendered by the Staff, and to the members of the graduating class congratulations on the completion of their studies, and the best wishes for lives full of happiness and success.

As you young men and women, who today pass out with the certificate of excellence from this Institution, enter upon your careers, you will be told, perhaps, that the world is all awry. To this you may apply the time-honored retort that "it always has been" and add without fear of serious error that "it always will be." On that score, however, there is no need for discouragement. But if the old world is constant and faithful to her traditional condition, she has shown from time to time compensating fickleness in changing the nature of her awryness. It is the change and not the fact that makes the impress. What is the nature of the change that you will meet that differs from one faced by those other generations? No simple answer can be given. Life is far too complicated to justify one reason being assigned as the actuating cause of anything. All the relations are so involved, so interwoven, that it is wrong if not actually futile, and futility in practical life marks a high note in wrongness, to attempt to say that a result flows from any one step, or that a condition is brought about by a single or even a few impulses.

The peculiar feature of awryness that will confront you, and that will be for you at the same time an obstacle and your opportunity, is a peculiar unintelligent slant of public opinion that resists being told anything by the expert. Though unintelligent, it is, nevertheless, powerful for the moment and must be reckoned with and not be ignored. To give it a name it might be called "The Revolt Against Constituted Authority." It is not very new, for it has been in the making ever since perhaps the time when scientific criticism first came into being, and when in the light of modern discovery and research so many accepted causes were subjected to the new rigid analysis to see how far they conformed to true theory and actual fact. Such criticism and readjustment were scientifically done by persons well versed in their respective fields. Then the movement, continuing according to the

laws of mechanics with its own internal momentum, gradually drifted into hands neither scientific nor competent and now it has become the fashion to rail at anything and everything that has been accepted as standard. Criticism and analysis leading to truth have given place to carping and uncontrolled antagonism that mark the path leading whither no man can tell.

We see evidences of this Revolt on every hand. In Government, where there is the desire to tear down whatever has been set up, whether it be an imperial autocracy as in Russia or the Constitution of the United States. The first has been replaced by the more terrible autocracy of unbridled demagoguery and the latter bids fair through amendments to be battered out of all semblance to that great document under whose principles of liberty and justice these United States have grown. We see it again in religion where present controversies are examples of individualism run mad. It shows its head, or hand, in education, with state legislatures dictating to men of science what they shall teach, exactly as was done to Galileo. It appears in the interpretation and administration of law, in the drama, business affairs and the home circle, and also in those realms that should be above interference — art, music and literature — the first is threatened with cubist designs, the second with jazz, and the last with every conceivable horror.

The Revolt is widespread among all phases of human activity and you will meet it in yours. Some people with no experience and no education will contest your sound claim to superiority in your chosen field. There will be those who will deny you the right of what they will term dictation, but what you will know to be only modest guidance. Those are the people who would reduce us all to the deadly level of mediocrity.

But this particular obstacle will be your opportunity and should prove by its annoying irritation to be an incentive to combat the reactionary spirit of those who delude themselves and try to delude others by calling themselves liberals.

You have chosen for yourselves a great vocation to be the keepers of the mighty storehouses of human experience and the knowledge of all times. As such it will be your duty to see that the treasures committed to your care will be placed within the reach of those faithful few who seek the truth, to aid them in their quest, and so far as possible to bring them to the attention of those others who for the moment fail to differentiate between sound achievement and personal notoriety. The opportunity is yours to help overcome the Revolt, and may the very difficulty of the task be to you an encouraging inspiration.

The principal speaker was Miss G. M. Walton, Librarian of the Michigan State Normal College, of Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Miss Walton read an address called:

The Lost Librarian

We are told "The librarian who reads is lost," so I find myself on this, your commencement day, in a congenial company of lost spirits, for half an hour's talk of book lovers and book loves.

The word Commencement Day has always seemed especially inopportune for those entering upon our work, and in its place I would prefer Emancipation Day, that is, a release from the drudgery of the weary texts on methods, the necessary imposition of the schools, which henceforth will simply be one's tools, "books which are no books" as Charles Lamb tells us — a day of glad escape and an entrance into that haven of reading "anything which I call a book," again to use Lamb's words.

Of course, some may prefer to descend into that possible limbo which I hesitate to name, where not being lost they may devote full time and *plus over time* to the amenities of purely clerical, administrative and statistical functions — absolving themselves from the delights of reading, upon which lost souls subsist.

Whence came this dictum "The librarian who reads is lost," whose authority still lingers so heavily, though happily on the decline owing perhaps to a change in attitude necessary to coping with the intelligent "Adult world" which we now are undertaking to educate?

I have always believed, from a fairly regular attendance of thirty-five years at the American Library Association, that the era of the phrase and its period of supreme popularity was about the beginning of the century, reaching perhaps its climax in the Montreal meeting in 1900 whence Dr. Billings wrote to a friend, "There are about four hundred librarians here and probably there never were so many people together so thoroughly satisfied with themselves."

High in the list of books that are books I place the "Life of Dr. Billings" who, perhaps more than any one in our profession, sensed, voiced and achieved the fair proportions of our great work.

One further word on "books which are books," and not "those things in book's clothing," a word of caution (my one personal word) lest this figure of speech be carried on to "things in librarian's clothing." The tourist whom I overheard in the Capitol Museum in Rome answering the question

— "67 Julius Caesar, who was Julius Caesar anyhow?" This tourist *may* have been a librarian without time to read because she answered, "Caesar? O he was a man who wrote a beginner's Latin book!"

Why not begin with a little talk about Charles Lamb? He holds high place among book loves and book lovers. One is always stumbling with him upon new or old delights. Only the other day I first read of a friend asking him with a tinge of reproach as he looked at Lamb's library of rather shabby and well-thumbed books, often picked up from the book stalls, and most of them with no titles on their backs, "How do you know your books?" and the answer was stammered quickly, "How does the shepherd know his sheep?" And we have the delightful picture in Elia, where Bridget recalls "the old brown suit which you made to hang upon you till all your friends called shame upon you, it grew so threadbare and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Baker's in Covent Garden.

"Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington fearing you should be too late, and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by a twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures, and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome, and when you presented it to me, and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (collating you called it), and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak?"

The devotion of Lamb to his sister Mary, the Bridget in Elia's essays, has a tragic pathos in those recurring seasons when she must again and again be placed in confinement. A friend relates how on one occasion he met the brother and sister walking hand in hand across the fields to the old asylum, both bathed in tears.

A touching incident was recently recalled by one of the flippant and sophomoric reviewers who so often beset us, and whose sole extenuation is the sense of flattered vanity to the lost soul whose reading holds him aloof from its futility. This particular culprit, writing of Alice Brown's recent drama, "Charles Lamb," remarked, "Many readers remember him probably because of Thackeray's facetious allusion to 'St. Charles.' "

You will recall this allusion in Fitzgerald's letters, where he writes of "dear Charles Lamb, St. Charles, as Thackeray once called him, while looking at one of his half-mad letters and remembering his devotion to that quite

mad sister." And again "St. Charles" said Thackeray to me thirty years ago, putting one of Charles Lamb's letters to his forehead. Why the particular letter, one written to Bernard Barton, and sparkling with drollery should have so moved Thackeray has puzzled many readers. Mr. Lucas believes the original letter (only recently printed in full) may perhaps give the key.

On the other side of the paper written painstakingly in a very minute hand with the two lines of verse in red and black inks is this pretty passage:

"Postscript for your daughter's eyes only.

"Dear Miss — Your pretty little letterets make me ashamed of my great straggling coarse handwriting. I wonder where you get pens to write so small. Sure it must be the pinions of a small wren or a robin. If you write so in your Album, you must give us glasses to read by. I have seen a Lady's similar book all writ in following fashion. I think it pretty and fanciful.

O how I love in early dawn
To bend my steps o'er flowery lawn

which I think has an agreeable variety to the eye, which I commend to your notice with friend Elia's best wishes."

Not much perhaps, yet the kind thought, the careful writing, are not common possessions, and to Thackeray, Lamb's life passed before him in a flash — its goodness, its frolicsome humor, its disappointments and its sorrows, and "St. Charles" becomes clear.

In "The Amenities of Book Collecting" we read the delicate narrative of his love for Miss Kelly of "the divine plain face." And, listen to Thackeray's daughter who died only the other day (in 1919). She writes to a friend: "I want to tell you of our afternoon with Charles Lamb. One could almost see him standing by his 'grand-dame's' grave at Widford Churchyard. Lady Buckmaster took us and showed us the house Lamb used to go to, such a quaint, prim, dim, little house. Then we had tea under the apple trees, where Lamb used also to go. There was an American lady who so adored him that last year she came over with her intended to be married at Widford Church, and the pew-opener gave her away. It was a strange combination of Elia and us, and the hundreds of soldiers from their billets, and then a lonely drive home in the sunset."

Anne Thackeray's life reached all but a year or two back to Lamb's and tied together a world of interesting literary friends throughout the century. Rarely does one find such joy and such solace as in this very recent book, Thackeray and his daughter; it is my latest book love.

Thackeray died many, many years ago and though we have no definitive life, there are sketches and sidelights, with letters, and the introductions to the Biographical edition, by his daughter where, as also in this newer book, we come gradually to know very well this big, tender-hearted man who, like Lamb, so bravely faced throughout life a living sorrow. The rich heritage of this daughter was the circle of his friends which broadened with her own long life. Here is a scrap from a letter to her son Billy, a schoolboy in France. "Our dinner was a great success, and Henry James not only ornamental but useful and really and truly kind. Arthur and Adeline enjoyed themselves extremely and appreciated his stories and descriptions. He is going to take us to see a cinematograph at the Palace — a flying train — and you see the country spinning before you, and then you plunge into tunnels and come again to more scenery. I asked him if he had read Sarah Grand's books. He said, 'It may be Pride, it may be Prejudice, but I have *not*,' so I said, 'Perhaps it may be Sense or Sensibility,' and Henry burst out laughing and said, 'I only need Persuasion.' God bless you, my darling, beloved boy, and 'he will,' as the old apple-woman used to say to my father." It is a long way from Charles Lamb to Billy and Henry James, with Anne Thackeray Ritchie probably as the last link in the friendly chain binding together these two circles.

All, all are gone — The old familiar faces

Lamb is his own best biographer in his letters, which have been collected and edited many times, perhaps most sympathetically by Canon Ainger. There was much in common in the two men in personality and quaint humor. It is amusing to find Ainger while still a boy signing his familiar letters Scaramouche, and certainly, like Sabatini's hero, he was born with the gift of laughter. A facile rhymster, he was ever ready for a friendly challenge, and when the word *porringer* once was proposed he instantly responded:

The Princess Mary fain would wed,
They gave the Prince of Orange her;
And never may it now be said,
There is no rhyme for "porringer."

Canon Ainger would have appreciated Howell's little episode: When loitering away an hour between trains in a small town he saw some books in a shop window, and entering asked for Charles Lamb's letters. With a wave of the hand the clerk answered, "Post Office just across the way, Sir."

Is it because we are all by nature such solemn creatures that it is so hard to show the mirthful side of others and always depict the heroic, the senti-

mental, and the good and Godly examples. Lamb's life scintillated with fun and often mad frolic, but into his intimate companionship with Mary it is difficult to write the flavor of his drollery. She tells us of his coming home "very smoky and very drinky o' nights," but that somehow, though bespeaking merry hours, very homely and human, rather lacks the gaiety we know was his, as in the closing line of a friendly letter — with which we take leave of him, "We expect you then Sunday — shoulder of lamb at 4, Always heart of — Lamb."

We may know few of these book friends, still by thus "listening in" we do feel a close book-kinship, and sometimes a very personal touch. It was a rare moment when I first held in my hands a letter from Lady Ritchie, and through it almost believed I had seen Thackeray and his little girls.

As in history one groups many events about certain dates of anchorage — the crowning of Charlemagne in the year 800, Magna Carta in 1215, etc., in like manner through the friendly associations of writers whom we cherish we have links in a chain to hold the dates of anchorage in the world of books throughout the ages.

We librarians all work much with young people, and with our college students I often feel the quick response to the few personal touches one may offer, as in saying long years ago waiting on the railway platform at Concord, someone told me "There is Louisa Alcott walking with Ellen Emerson"; or in showing my copy of "A Child's Ride with Dickens," autographed by Kate Douglas Wiggin. Or, as the children in this library were saying last fall, "Yes, Walter de la Mare is alive — we saw him." So I could tell my class in January, "The lady with me yesterday was Anne Carroll Moore who wrote 'Roads to Childhood,' and Nicholas was with her."

One other illustration — Most of us probably without claiming to be collectors gather together a few association books. Last year I ordered from an English catalogue a volume of John Brown's "Rab and his Friends and Other Papers," and also Canon Beeching's "Paradise of English Poetry." When my books came I found written on the fly leaf of Dr. Brown's book, "To the Reverend A. P. Stanley with the author's best wishes," while inside the front cover was the book plate of the Reverend Dr. Beeching, Little Cloisters, Westminster. When Dean Stanley was in America many years ago I went to hear him preach at Grace Church. His name is less familiar than it was then and he was regarded by our very orthodox friends somewhat as Dr. Fosdick is to-day — a rather dangerous man.

Lady Ritchie, for we must not leave her yet, when asked which she liked best, books or people, answered, "How can I say — books are people."

This may have been the meaning of Saintsbury, that grand old veteran, when he wrote, "I would like to read all of men's writings and none of their lives." Most of us might qualify this, for often without somewhat knowing the life we lose much from the works. Thackeray and Stevenson write themselves into almost every page, others are wholly impersonal, as Edward Dowden, whom I had read with enthusiasm, but when his letters were printed the sidelights on his writings and himself were inimitable. To quote a pet phrase of Macaulay, "I must give you a sample of my wares" from a letter to his brother, John Dowden, lately made Bishop of Edinburgh.

"A point in casuistry, dear Father in God. A mouse has devoured my books. He had choice of 500 and he mounted up seven shelves and picked out German and Russian translations of my 'Shakespeare, His mind, etc.' I am deeply touched by the compliment and the mouse is learned.

"Query: May I set a trap for an admirer and fellow student of Shakespeare?"

Mention of Macaulay gives excuse for a (final) "sample" from Lady Ritchie. In one of the very last letters she writes, "Have you read Macaulay's life lately? I cannot tell you how I have enjoyed reading it again, and my father walks in and out of it in a most amusing way.

"There is a story of the Zoo, two ladies visiting the newly-arrived hippopotamus. My father hears one say to the other, 'That is the way in; and Oh! there is Lord Macaulay coming out — which would you rather see?' Second Lady: 'Lord Macaulay — never mind the hippopotamus,' and they rush after Lord Macaulay. Later he meets my father who repeats the conversation which he (Lord Macaulay) says is the greatest compliment he ever received."

Once in the realm of literary and biographical essays, where may one begin or leave off? In order of my own reading Washington Irving must needs come first. A handsome edition in half calf stood in a book case just under the shelf devoted to my own infantile library, embellished with the "Three Billy Goats," the Rollo books, "Spectacles for Young Eyes," Mother Goose, etc., representing, if we were technical, animal stories, ethics, travel and poetry — from which I gradually advanced to my passion for essays and biography on the shelf below, my mother long antedating the modern children's librarian's edict — "Clean hands for Irving and the Lady of the Lake" (the latter in resplendent tree calf).

Even before this transition, on my first ride by boat down the Hudson River, Sunnyside was pointed out. Now hidden by trees, it was then in full

view from the river. At the time there was a hazy confusion in my mind about the names of Washington Irving and George Washington.

With Irving, "Much have I traveled in the realms of gold" and nowhere more intimately than to Abbotsford where I almost expected to see Scott hurrying down to the gate with his hearty welcome, so vividly told in Irving's sketch.

Scott should lead us to romance, but time presses so I will use his Life by Lockhart as a convenient peg on which to hang other lives. One of the groupings of "Best Books" names it arbitrarily with Boswell's Johnson and Trevelyan's Macaulay as the three greatest biographies. Well — granted that classics are classics and should stand upon the shelves of the proverbial "every gentleman's library" and that a speaking acquaintance with all three is necessary to one's own comfort and will generally lead to acquaintanceship, or friendship; still my books are not always your books, neither are your books always mine. We are pretty sure, however, to claim very much in common.

Many lost librarians believe that had Sidney Colvin written the long-hoped-for Life of Stevenson the categorical "three best" would have gained a fourth best. In its place we must be fairly content with his edition of the letters, and his study of R. L. S. in the "Memories and Notes of Persons and Places." In this book we have also a glimpse of Colvin's own boyhood in East Suffolk where he was neighbor to both Bernard Barton and Edward Fitzgerald, the one belonging to the earlier generation of Lamb, the other the lifelong friend of Tennyson and Thackeray.

Of Fitzgerald, he writes, "All we boys saw in him was an odd, tall, sad-faced, middle-aged or elderly gentleman, wandering, or rather drifting abstractedly about the country roads in an ill-fitting suit with a shabby hat pushed well back on his head, blue spectacles on nose and an old cape cast anyhow about his shoulders. Few figures were more familiar to me by sight, few less regarded; and many a time must my pony's hoofs have bespattered this forlorn figure as we cantered past him in the neighboring lanes."

Another chapter tells the story of a visit in 1881 to Trelawney, the friend in youth of Shelley, Keats, Severn, and Lord Byron. Of his parting with Trelawney, a rather crabbed and very old man, Colvin writes, "To have shaken the hand which plucked Shelley's heart out of the ashes was an experience one is not likely to forget."

Sidney Colvin, Edmund Gosse and Robert Louis Stevenson, two of them still living, form another group dear to a large circle.

One giant, both in stature and charm came to most of us only in the later years of his long life through "Far Away and Long Ago" — the story of his boyhood on the Argentine pampas; but having gotten the habit, one finds it indispensable to have a volume of Hudson within easy reach.

I hope no one is waiting for a word on the serious reading which all lost librarians must undertake — directed by choice, by chance, or by dire necessity. John Addington Symonds wrote to a friend: "I divide my reading at present into deep, middling and shallow." I could travel with you through the deep reading from a to z, or from 000–900 suggesting appropriate decimal captions — behavioristic psychology; modernism versus fundamentalism; constitutional law; prosody to free verse; and on through science and art, literature and history.

Of the third class, "shallow," none of us might desire, however "lost," to proclaim our taste in public; while of the middling you may already be minded of my best and perennial story of the two tramps — Tramp No. 1: "Were you ever so hungry you had to eat coke?" Tramp No. 2: "No, I never tried it." Tramp No. 1: "Well, you didn't miss much." And it is wholly possible you may think me a little given to a diet of coke.

Possibly, too, I am quite wrong in my use of this half hour which the conventions of education decree you should spend on this day in listening to an address. Of course, I might say, "Now, young men and women, you stand on the threshold of a professional career, etc." But I have a strong belief that if your long season here has not prepared you to go forth, valiantly and well fitted for your work, words of mine would be worthless.

Indeed, words must be supreme in such a season to worthily honor the occasion, and only once do I know of its achievement, namely, when Sir James Barrie delivered the rectorial address at St. Andrew's in 1922. Buy this little book I beg of each of you, and may it ever be the talisman which its title bespeaks — "Courage!"

For myself, with the thought of meeting you to-day, I could but glance along my shelves, picking out a book here and there which led me on to others. Call it reading for fun if you like, or loitering along the pleasant byways whence some favorite author leads; and Symonds, of whom we were speaking, has led me far and long, beginning many, many years ago with his Renaissance in Italy, and later to delightful hours in the study of English schools and schoolmasters.

Of course, we all know Tom Brown, and Harry East, and Dr. Arnold at Rugby, and I had even visited Winchester College, reading over its doorway the motto of William of Wykham, its founder, "Manners maketh

man," and then I found Symonds as a Harrow boy, and his friendship with John Smith, one of the younger masters, taking "Long walks in which we repeated passages learned by heart from the poets — Tennyson, Shelley, Keats, with the goal frequently at the home of Smith's dear old mother, where after spouting The Two Voices, The Skylark, and

> St. Agnes eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!
> The owl for all his feathers was a-cold

they appeased their voracious appetites with cold veal and ham pie, copious draughts of good tea, reinforced by bread and butter and strawberry jam." Acquaintance with these schools and schoolmasters takes one into many relationships, and new viewpoints, as on finding Dr. Kennedy of Shrewsbury, in Butler's "Way of all Flesh," as Dr. Skinner of Roughborough.

A great scholar and a maker of great scholars, we will leave Dr. Kennedy and the whole subject with one word only of his simplemindedness and his inability to meet quickly a practical emergency. Coming into a room suddenly he sat upon a chair in which Mrs. Kennedy had laid the baby. He did not move but screamed, "Janet, Janet, I've sat on the baby."

So far and not a word of the poets! I wonder how early rhyme and rhythm have any real poetic flavor for each of us? I think I must have learned the names of a good many poets when about six years old the smallest children at the convent were drilled in "The choice of a vocation" and I can still hear my thin, high-pitched voice piping my little part:

> I'd like to be a poetess
> With a wild romantic name,
> And all the world in wonderment
> At my unbounded fame.
>
> Homer and Milton would be forgot,
> Dante laid on the shelf —
> Shakespeare an annihilated being
> Beside my gifted self —
> (and much more)

Like the Wandering Knight "My journeyings are long" but have happily never carried me to poetic flights.

Many people say they do not like poetry, that they cannot understand it, that it was spoiled for them by the silly questions asked in school — "Why was the daisy yellow?" "What do you think the poet meant by this line?" etc. Happily, this is not an *apologia pro poetica* and I will merely call to your remembrance that pleasant quotation from old Christopher North —

"It is not necessary we should understand fine poetry in order to feel and enjoy it, any more than fine music."

You will recall, too, in the "Memoirs of a Midget," she was questioned regarding a poem she has just read aloud. "I don't think I know myself *exactly* what the poem means. One hasn't time to pry about for all its bits of meaning, but only just to get the general — general — *auroma.*"

Was it not Andrew Lang who once asked, "Why not a calendar of poets? Surely there are enough for every day of the year." Already keeping many of their birthdays as high festivals I took the hint and pass it on to you as one of my ghostly amenities. A large Line-a-Day book serves the need and this anthology forms a very personal Paradise, to use a pleasant and quaint old phrase.

May I read to you from to-day's page, June 12? Canon Kingsley —

> High among the lonely hills
> While I lay beside my sheep,
> Peace came down and filled my soul,
> From the everlasting deep.
>
> Changeless march the stars above,
> Changeless morn succeeds to even;
> Still the everlasting hills
> Changeless watch the changeless heaven.

Was it Quiller-Couch, that prince of anthologists, who suggested that after all each lover of poetry in reality makes his own chosen collection? You remember Fitzgerald referring more than once to some new poem "put into my Paradise," including many of Shakespeare's Sonnets, "giving each a fair white sheet: there being nothing worthy to be on the same page," and again, "I admit nothing to my Paradise but such as breathe content and virtue."

Thomas Bird Mosher, the Portland bookman, in printing his collection, named it Amphora, from Leigh Hunt's "A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla" and took his foreword from Arthur Machen:

> I should scarcely be justified in calling him a literary monomaniac. But it is true that Art in general, and the art of literature in particular had for him a very high significance and interest; and he was always ready to defend the thesis that, all the arts being glorious, the literary art was the most glorious and wonderful of all. He reverenced music, but he was firm in maintaining that in perfect lyrical poetry there is the subtlest and most beautiful melody in the world.

Fearing you have seen "The Goose Hangs High" and may be already calling me Mrs. Whiffen, I hasten to bring you in conclusion the latest and

the best: Come Hither, a collection of rhymes and poems for the young of all ages, by Walter de la Mare. I give you also Saintsbury's injunction, when having borrowed from a public library a book warmly commended, he opened at random to one or two pages, and promptly returned the book, immediately ordering a copy from his bookseller in obedience to the law which ordains, "that true poetry shall never (cases of necessity being excluded) be read except in a book belonging to the reader."

Listen to the lines with which Mr. de la Mare begins and also closes Come Hither. Although no author is given, they are unquestionably his, and the only ones of his own which he admits to this Paradise of poets.

THIS IS THE KEY

This is the Key of the Kingdom
In that Kingdom is a city;
In that city is a town;
In that town there is a street;
In that street there winds a lane;
In that lane there is a yard;
In that yard there is a house;
In that house there waits a room;
In that room an empty bed;
And on that bed a basket —
A Basket of Sweet Flowers:
Of Flowers, of Flowers;
A Basket of Sweet Flowers.

Flowers in a basket;
Basket on the bed;
Bed in the chamber;
Chamber in the house;
House in the weedy yard;
Yard in the winding lane;
Lane in the broad street;
Street in the high town;
Town in the city;
City in the Kingdom —
This is the Key of the Kingdom.
Of the Kingdom this is the Key.

St. Francis of Assisi being importuned to name the grace one most should covet, replied, "Humility, Humility, Humility!" To-day I would say to you, The Kingdom, The Kingdom, The Kingdom.

And into that wonderful Kingdom on this your last day of school, I gladly welcome you and wish you Godspeed.